

6. PHASING AND IMPLEMENTATION

The identified Preferred Bikeway Concepts for the SR-89 Cascade to Rubicon Bay corridor involve a number of different options for improving bicycle access to the corridor. These improvements will not occur immediately, and will most likely be implemented in several phases and over a number of years. For each alternative, additional planning, design, engineering, and agency coordination will be required beyond the scope of this Bikeway Study.

For each of the alternatives – off-street path, bikes on transit, bicycle water ferry – it is critical to the long-term success of that alternative that the first phase of implementation be well-used and build momentum for implementation of future phases. In addition, multiple jurisdictional support for a project will fare much better through a funding request than a project with only single jurisdictional support.

PHASING RECOMMENDATIONS

ON-HIGHWAY ALTERNATIVE

Shoulder widening along the SR-89 study corridor will be completed per the Caltrans water quality improvement project schedule, currently anticipated for completion in 2010.

OFF-HIGHWAY ALTERNATIVE

Phase I: Before this alternative can realistically be developed, extension of the West Shore Bike Path from its current terminus in Sugar Pine Point State Park to Meeks Bay needs to be completed. That extension will likely increase the popularity of the West Shore path by connecting Tahoe City to the popular Meeks Bay Resort and campground areas.

Phase II: Once the West Shore path is completed to Meeks Bay, implementation of the Off-Highway Bikeway route can begin. The first key stage of this route should be a connection to Lester Beach. This would require development of an off-street connection from Meeks Bay into the “Gold Coast” residential street network, and then development of an off-street connection along Paradise Flat into D.L. Bliss State Park.

Phase III: The third phase of the off-highway path development should be from D.L. Bliss State Park to the terminus at the top of the viaduct in Emerald Bay State Park. This phase of the bike path development would need to occur in conjunction with improvements to a new shuttle stop at the top of the viaduct, including the installation of bike locks, new trailheads, and signage into the destinations of Emerald Bay State Park (e.g. Vikingsholm, Emerald Point).

WATER FERRY

As discussed in chapter 4, a logical first step for a bicycle ferry project would be for a local non-profit group to seek grant funds to operate a pilot bike ferry project during all or a portion of the summer tourist period. This program would likely involve leasing a vessel and docking space, and offering the ferry service on a free or low-fee basis to draw initial interest in the program.

TRANSIT

Improvements to transit service and bicycle access on transit through Emerald Bay should be considered in the context of implementing changes to vehicular access to the Emerald Bay area, time limits on parking or potential reductions in parking spaces. Such changes would need to be explored in conjunction with State Parks and the US Forest Service, as well as local transit operators. In the meantime, transit operators should work to increase service and headways to the area, ensure that bicycles are permitted on all buses and trolleys (either on racks or inside the vehicle), and to promote bikes-on-transit at major lodging areas, particularly in South Lake Tahoe, to encourage visitors to try bike-bus trips into Emerald Bay. At a minimum, bicycle racks should be provided on all publicly-funded scheduled service transit vehicles serving the corridor (or equivalent bike rack capacity allowed in-vehicle), as a requirement of receiving transit funding through TRPA.

As noted above, the new transit/shuttle stop recommended for the top of the viaduct would need to be developed in conjunction with developing the final segment of the Off-Highway Bikeway, to ensure that cyclists who take that route have a transit option back toward Meeks Bay or Tahoe City.

FUNDING

FUNDING SOURCES

One of the goals of this Bikeway Study is to ensure that the region can receive funding to successfully implement the bikeway and related facilities. There are a variety of potential funding sources including local, state, and federal funding programs that can be used to construct the SR-89 Bikeway. Most Federal, state, and regional programs are competitive, and involve the completion of extensive applications with clear documentation of the project need, costs, and benefits. Local funding for bicycle projects typically comes from Transportation Development Act (TDA) funding, which is prorated to each community based on return of gasoline taxes.

Generally speaking, recreational shared use trails do not qualify for transportation funding through the TEA-21 (Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century). TEA-21 contains two major programs, STP (Surface Transportation Program) and CMAQ (Congestion Management and Air Quality Improvements) along with other programs such as the National Recreational Trails Fund (which a recreational trail would qualify for funding), and Federal Lands Highway funds. TEA-21 funding is administered through the State (California Transportation Commission) and regional governments.

A number of funding sources are summarized below.

LOCAL SOURCES

Rental Car Mitigation Program

Rental car customers in the Tahoe Region are imposed a \$4 per day fee. The TRPA collects the fees from rental car businesses and disburses the funds to the Tahoe Transportation District (TTD) for use on projects that implement the Regional Transportation Plan – Air Quality Plan. In 2002, these funds were used for operating assistance for the Tahoe Trolley and Nifty 50 Trolley programs.

SB 2766 Program

California counties are given the authority of impose a vehicle fee for funding air quality improvement programs. El Dorado County collects \$4 per vehicle. These funds can be used on a variety of transportation projects that reduce automobile emissions.

Transient Occupancy Tax

The transient occupancy tax is an 8% tax levied on hotel/motel stays of 30 days or less in the unincorporated areas of El Dorado County. The funds generated from this tax are used for tourism and recreation purposes.

Traffic and Air Quality Mitigation Program

This program assesses a fee on new developments based on the number of daily vehicle trips that can be expected. Fees are paid to the TRPA, who then disburse the funds to local jurisdictions. Projects that qualify must support TRPA's 1992 Air Quality Plan and the Regional Transportation Plan.

STATE SOURCES

Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program (EEM)

The Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program is administered by the California Resources Agency to mitigate the environmental impacts of modified or new public transportation facilities. One category of eligible projects is roadside recreation, which includes trails.

Lake Tahoe License Plate Program

The California Tahoe Conservancy offers a special license plate depicting a prominent feature of Lake Tahoe. Plates cost \$50 initially and \$40 for an annual renewal fee. Revenue from license plate sales may be used by the Conservancy or local governments under contract with CTC. Funds can be used to construct and improve trails, pathways, and public access for non-motorized traffic within the California portion of Lake Tahoe.

Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2002 ("2002 Resources Bond")

In March 2002, California voters approved Proposition 40 allowing the state to issue \$2.6 billion for the acquisition, protection, development, and rehabilitation of recreational, cultural, and natural areas. Several grant programs administered by the California Department of Parks and Recreation are included in Proposition 40. El Dorado County would qualify for the "Per Capita Grant

Program,” which could provide \$1.2 million for park and recreation facilities. Another grant, “Nonurbanized Area Need Basis Grants” of the Roberti-Z’Berg-Harris (RZH) Grant Program, provides funding for park and recreation facilities in nonurbanized areas.

Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP)

“This is a funding category created by Senate Bill 45 that can be used for a variety of projects, including intermodal facilities, road rehabilitation, and bicycle and pedestrian projects. Projects are selected by the Tahoe Transportation Planning Agency based upon projects included in the Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP).

State Highway Operations and Protection Program (SHOPP)

SHOPP funds can be used by Caltrans to maintain and improve state highways. The program is prepared by Caltrans biennially and approved by the California Transportation Commission.

Local Transportation Fund

The Transportation Development Act (TDA) of 1972 provides two sources of transportation funding, the Local Transportation Fund (LTF) and the State Transit Assistance (STA) fund. The LTF is derived from 1/44 of each retail sales tax dollar collected statewide, and 1/44 is returned to each county according to the amount of tax collected within its boundaries. These funds are collected by the State Board of Equalization but administered locally through the TRPA. Eligible projects may include transit, bicycle, and pedestrian purposes.

FEDERAL

Federal Lands Highway Program

These funds may be used to build bicycle and pedestrian facilities in conjunction with roads and parkways at the discretion of the department charged with administration of the funds. The projects must be transportation-related and tied to a plan adopted by the State and MPO.

Recreational Trails Program

The Recreational Trails Program provides funds to states to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail-related facilities for both non-motorized and motorized recreational trail uses. Examples of trail uses include hiking, bicycling, in-line skating, equestrian use, and other non-motorized as well as motorized uses. These funds are intended for recreational trails; they may not be used to improve roads for general passenger vehicle use or to provide shoulders or sidewalks along roads. The program was authorized in 1998 under TEA-21.

Recreational Trails Program funds may be used for:

- Maintenance and restoration of existing trails;
- Development and rehabilitation of trailside and trailhead facilities and trail linkages;
- Purchase and lease of trail construction and maintenance equipment;

- Construction of new trails (with restrictions for new trails on federal lands);
- Acquisition of easements or property for trails;
- State administrative costs related to this program (limited to seven percent of a State's funds); and
- Operation of educational programs to promote safety and environmental protection related to trails (limited to five percent of a State's funds).

Transportation Enhancement Activity Funds

Transportation Enhancement Funds are a major source of federal funds available directly for pedestrian and bicycle projects. These funds are set aside by TEA-21 in order to add community or environmental value to a completed or ongoing transportation project. An 11.8% local/state match is required to receive these federal funds.

Some eligible transportation enhancement activities include the following:

- Provision of facilities for pedestrians and bicycles
- Provision of safety and educational activities for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Acquisition of scenic easements and scenic or historic sites
- Scenic or historic highway programs
- Landscaping and other scenic beautification
- Historic preservation
- Rehabilitation and operation of historic transportation buildings, structures, or facilities
- Mitigation of water pollution due to highway runoff

Local government projects must be sponsored by a governmental body and must be adopted as a priority by the MPO. Eligible State and federal agencies need to coordinate with the MPO. Private non-profit organizations are also able to work with governmental agencies to develop project applications. Transportation enhancement funds must be matched with other non-Federal funds in the amount of 5.7 percent of the total project cost.